

St. Stephen's News

St. Stephen's Anglican Church,
Timonium, Maryland

Vol. XXII, Number 18

Edited by Anne Hawkins

May 10th, 2011

FROM THE HOUSE OF BISHOPS

Rev. John Vaughan is named Vicar General

BISHOP Brian Marsh, our Episcopal Visitor, has appointed The Rev. John Vaughan as the Vicar General of the Diocese of the Eastern United States. The appointment was announced following the recent meeting in Tucson, Arizona of the House of Bishops and National Council of the Anglican Church in America.

At the same meeting, Bishop Marsh was named the church's Presiding Bishop *pro tem*. According to canon law, the appointment must be confirmed at the National Synod to be held at the Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows, Belleville, Illinois in September. Bishop Marsh succeeds Archbishop Louis Falk, who has submitted his resignation after completing a two year term as Presiding Bishop.

The appointment of Father Vaughan as Vicar General should make life much easier for Bishop Marsh, who as Bishop of the Diocese of the North East resides in Connecticut. It gives him a right hand man who is a resident of the diocese.

Father Vaughan is a member of the diocesan Standing Committee and the rector of St. Patrick's Anglican Church in Port St. John, Florida. Aged 54, his candidacy as diocesan bishop won the unanimous support of the delegates at the Diocesan Synod held at this parish in late March.

The diocese has petitioned the House of Bishops to issue a "writ of election" permitting the Standing Committee to convene an electoral synod. Meanwhile Father Vaughan will serve as Vicar General at least until the election of a new bishop takes place.

Father Vaughan, a native of Ireland, hails from County Cork. He was ordained to the Roman Catholic priesthood in 1985 and assigned to the Diocese of Miami. He left the Roman Church for Anglicanism in 1995. His speciality in both the Roman and Anglican Churches has been healing troubled parishes.

He is the proud father of an 18-year-old son who plays in a punk rock band and the owner of two highly opinionated miniature Doberman Pinchers.

FROM THE RECTOR

Cherubs aren't babies with shiney bottoms

EASTER is one of those occasions when we are confronted with the existence of angels. They minister to Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane before his arrest, and they inform the women at the empty tomb that Jesus is risen.

Yet today many people claim to have difficulty believing in angels. They seem inclined to write them off as the religious equivalent of gnomes, elves, pixies and fairies at the bottom of the garden – in other words "vain superstitions."

However, the bland assumption that angels are merely a "vain superstition" presents us with a serious problem. Not least, the Bible makes mention of them on many occasions.

References to angels permeate the Scriptures from one end to the other – from the Book of Genesis to the Book of Revelation. Indeed, the very first is to be found at the very beginning of God's revelation of himself to mankind. You'll find it the 24 verse of the third chapter of Genesis.

After God throws Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden, He places Cherubim armed with flaming swords at the gates of Eden to make sure that they stay out.

It must be admitted, however, that many perfectly reasonable and devout Christians experience considerable difficulty in accepting the existence of angels. Press them, and usually one finds that they think the concept of angels is somehow or the other irrational.

Perhaps a major reason for this is the imagery we employ. A meaningless debate on an utterly inconsequential subject is described as arguing over "the number of angels that can dance on the head of a pin" – a description that trivializes angels, making them quite ridiculous.

Confusions also arises from the way angels are portrayed artistically – and not just in the fine arts but also in popular art forms: record jackets, Christmas cards, cartoons and the like. Even great artists, like Fra Angelico, Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo, portray angels as decidedly "girly" in appearance.

To modern eyes, they look more Cinderella dressed up for the ball than messengers off to deliver an announcement from God. They certainly don't look in the least bit scary, which must make it difficult for the average reader to figure out why the shepherds in the

St. Luke's Gospel (1:9) felt "sore afraid" or why the Archangel Gabriel at the annunciation felt compelled to tell the Blessed Virgin Mary: "Fear not."

Furthermore, the odds are probably at least 1000-to-1 that mention the word "cherub" evokes the image of a little fat baby with a shiny bottom. After all, this is the way that cherubim are portrayed in just about every stately home in Europe.

Every baroque painter that ever was painted cherubs as little fat babies with shiny bottoms and the chocolate box and greeting card industry continues the tradition. But how is it possible to take messengers from God seriously when they look either like drag queens or advertisements

for baby formula?

Such imagery, however, is very far from Scriptural reality. According to The Bible, angels are terrifying creatures. Here's how the prophet Ezekiel begins his description of cherubim: "I looked, and behold a whirlwind was coming out of the north, a great cloud with raging fire engulfing itself; and brightness was all around it and radiating out of its midst like the color of amber, out of the midst of the fire." This, by the way, isn't the cherubim – merely the vehicle in which they travel.

Ezekiel describes the cherubim as follows: "From within it came the likeness of four living creatures . . . They had the likeness of a man. Each one had four faces, and each one had four wings. Their legs were straight, and the soles of their feet were like the soles of calves' feet. They sparkled like the color of burnished bronze. They had the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides..."

"As for the likeness of their faces, each had the face of a man, each of the four had the face of a lion on the right side, each of the four had the face of an ox on the left side, and each of the four had the face of an eagle . . ."

And just in case you think that Ezekiel was prone to bad dreams as a consequence of eating too much supper, it might be worth reading Isaiah's views on the subject. Here's his description of the type of angels called Seraphim (6:1-2): "I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above it stood six seraphim: each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew."

When one reads the eyewitness accounts, it is difficult to see how artists formed the opinion that angels look either like well-coiffed ladies or pudgy infants. They also make it much easier to understand the description of St. Stephen, speaking passionately in his own defense. Those who were there reported they "saw his face as the face of an angel."

The face they saw was neither that of a drag queens nor an infant on baby formula advertisement. Stephen devastated his accusers,

ST STEPHEN'S CHOIR OF MEN & BOYS

will sing a

Choral Evensong for the
Sunday After The Ascension

at 6 PM on

Sunday, June 5th, 2011

People of all faith traditions
are heartily welcome
Reception to follow

**THE SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR
THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER
and a Commemoration of St. George, May 15th 2011**

**8.00 AM & 9.15 AM
HOLY COMMUNION**
The Epistle: I St. Peter 2:11-17
The Gospel: St. John 16:16-22
11.15 MORNING PRAYER
The Psalter: Psalm 138
The First Lesson: II Samuel 12:15-23
The Second Lesson: St. John 14:1-14

intellectually and theologically, driving them into a frenzy of hatred so intense they dragged him outside and stoned him to death.

Confronted with the biblical record, we should have the humility to consider the possibility that our problems with angels are entirely of our own making. After all, for the great Creator of heaven and the earth "and all that therein is" to create an angel or two would simply have been a piece of cake. **GPH**

FROM THE VESTRY

Annual Meeting, June 5th

ST. STEPHEN'S Annual Parish Meeting will take place between the 9.15 AM and the 11.15 AM services on Ascension Sunday, June 5th. Members attending the meeting will hear the Rector's report on the state of the parish, the reports of the Treasurer and Wardens, and elect candidates for the Vestry. Nominations for the vestry and their biographies will be published in the next issue of the newsletter.

THE LADIES WHO LUNCH

Join us on Wednesday May 18

THE LADIES will be lunching at the Peppermill Restaurant on York Road at 12 noon on Wednesday, May 18th. We cordially invite all ladies to join us for fine food and fellowship. To reserve a place, please call Joyce Perlberg at 410-252-2680.

✠ PARISH PRAYER LIST ✠

OUR Prayer Chain offers prayer daily for people on the Prayer List and guests of the Joseph Richey Hospice. To add a name to the list, or to the visiting list, or to join the Prayer Chain, call the office at 410 560 6776.

RECOVERY: Blair, Jim, Georgetta, Melvin, Noah, Mavis, Heather, Laurie, Diane, Don, Lynn, Helen, Katherine, Hindra, Sara, Ravi, Elizabeth, Brian, Tracey, Linda, Robert, Nancy, Edithann, Doris, Jay, Perry, Amelia, Shirley, Adrian, Kimberly, Dean, Barb, Tanya, Jane, Brook, Val, Helen, Joseph, Joshua, Rachel, Carl, Cal, Catherine, Sam, Ruth, Kristi, Paul, Sue, Patty, Antonio, Lauren-Michelle, McKayla, Randy, Jack, Grace, Bob, Fran, Carolyn, Ken, Serina, Wyatt, Bobby, Alexander, Erline, Kathleen, Earle, Judy, William, Betty, Trisha, Peggy, Linda, Millie, Walt, Bruce, Cienna, Tracy, Tom, Lelliah, Jennifer, Miriam, Karen, George, Eliza, Mel, John, Randy, James, Sarah, Linda, Suzanne, Marian, Steven, Jeanne, Tammy; Ellen, Patricia, Bonnie, Mary Ann, Robert, Christine, Dee, Brian, Barbara, Gillian, Eileen, Matthew, Bryan, Jason, Jane, Joan, Frances, Pat, Michael, Ray, Leslie, Brandon, May, Scott, Stephen, Robert, Danny, Billy, Betty-Ann, Mildred, D'Metrius, Laura, Stacey, Frank, Alma, Christine, John, Henry, Naomi, Pam, Ben, Kevin, Gwen, Gloria, Lee Emily, Elsie, Bruce, Regina, Lewis, Madolin, Linda, Carol, Bernie, Charlene, Josephine, Margaret, Jody, Sheila, Jo Anne, John, Geradine, Thomas, Jeanne, Sister Catherine-Grace, Maxine, Ann Sharon, Dennis, Mae, Anita, Marilyn, Lawrence, Rebecca, Dorothy, Joanne, *Albion, Martha, Jackie, Charles, Tony, Edward, Kim, Vivian and Carol.

LIGHT, STRENGTH & GUIDANCE: Rosa, June, Anna, Jean, Garrett, Ned, & Stephen, Rachel, Robert & Renee, Lydia; Richard, Melba, Debbie, Phyllis, Georgetta, Carolyn, Suzanne, Tony, Erik, Doris, Drake, The Norris family; Gillian, Beverley, Adrienn, Jhana, Marla, Matthew, Joan, David, Laurie, Ellen, Lynn, Mildred, Sarah Lee, Tom, Susan, Kathy, Owen, Douglas, Amy, Jo Anne, Mary, Gregory, Isabel, Bobby, Dorothy, Darren, Scott, Rebecca, William, Charles, Joyce, Asfa, Eleanor, Kathy, Linda, James, Barry, Ann, Evelyn, Jeanette, Elizabeth, Virginia, Mildred, Chris, Stephen, Carol, Sandra, John, Mary, Michael and David

ON ACTIVE SERVICE: Lt. Benjamin Schramm, USMC; LTC. R. J. Lytle, PFC Charles E. Heintz, IV, U.S. Army; Alex Bursi, US. Navy; Capt. Charles Bursi & LTC Harry Hughes, U.S. Air Force.

✠ St. Stephen's Anglican Church ✠

11856 Mays Chapel Road, Timonium, MD 21093
Tel.: Office (410) 560-6776; Rectory (410) 665-1278
Web Address: ststeve.com.

RECTOR: The Venerable Guy P. Hawtin
VICAR: The Rev. Rhae E. Kelley
ORGANIST & CHOIRMASTER: Adric
DIRECTOR OF PASTORAL CARE: Anne Hawkins (410-308-2771)
WEDDING CO-ORDINATOR: Anne Hawkins (410-308-2771)

SUNDAY SERVICES
8.00am -- Holy Communion
9.15am -- Holy Communion
(Nursery & Church School)
11.15am -- Morning Prayer
(1st. Sun. of the month: Holy Communion at 11.15am)
(1st Sun. of the month: Choral Evensong at 6.00pm)

WEEKDAY SERVICES
Wednesday: 6.00pm Evening Prayer
Friday: Noon: Healing Eucharist
Saturday: 5.00 PM Family Eucharist.

**COLLECT: 2ND SUNDAY AFTER
EASTER**

ALMIGHTY God, who hast given us thine only Son to be unto us both a sacrifice for sin, and also an ensample of godly life; Give us grace that we may always most thankfully receive that his inestimable benefit, and also daily endeavour ourselves to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life; through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *AMEN.*

Book of Common Prayer, Page 171

Return Service Requested

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